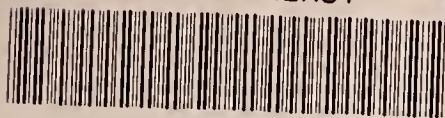


MASS. ED 1.23 C38 / PIONEER VALLEY / 1995

1995 Charter School Application

UMASS/AMHERST



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Basic Fact Sheet

by the Executive Office of Education to conduct quick analysis of the applications received. Must be accurate, and must correspond to that which is provided in the body of the proposal. Provide reviewers at the Executive Office of Education with a snapshot of your proposal.

Pioneer Valley Charter School

Proposed Charter School Name

Deerfield (negotiating)

School Location (city/town)

Contact Person

DR. First Marianne

Middle E.

Last Everett

Organization

Address 47 Forest Ave.

City Greenfield

State MA

Zip 01301

Telephone (413) 773-7632

Fax ()

Founding Coalition:

(Check Box)

Private For-Profit

Parents

Teachers

Business

☐

☒

☐

Community Based

Other Founding

Organization Museum

Group

☐

☐

☐

Grade Level

(Check Box)

Elementary

☒

Middle

☐

Secondary

☐

Other

Grade

Level

☐

Projected Student Enrollment

Projected Student Enrollment (1st Year)

100

Projected Student Enrollment (2nd Year)

150

Projected Student Enrollment (3rd Year)

200

Projected Student Enrollment (4th Year)

Projected Student Enrollment (5th Year)

Total Number of Teachers

Teacher/Student Ratio

In what type of community will the Charter School be located?

Urban School District

☐

Rural School District

☒

Suburban School District

☐

Other Kind of Community

☐

Do you presently have access to a facility suitable for a school?

Yes

☒

No

☐

(to purchase and renovate)

School Focus:

In succinct terms, describe the focus and primary characteristics of your proposed school and/or students to be served, (i.e., math & science, arts, school-based services, at-risk youth, college preparatory, basic skills, interdisciplinary learning, and competency-based learning).

This school will have a three-fold focus: a child development basis in its learning theory, an interdisciplinary project approach to curriculum, and the integration of the arts throughout the curriculum, designing ways to foster the seven kinds of intelligence in learning and teaching.

Executive Summary (one page):

To help the Executive Office of Education accurately portray your charter school proposal to the public, please attach a one page description of your school. This description should outline, in clear terms, the educational model to be employed; the replicability of that model; student demographics; and other characteristics setting this school apart from other traditional public schools. Above all, this summary should capture the vision of the founders.

RECEIVED

FEB 15 1995

EXECUTIVE OFFICE
OF EDUCATION

95-23

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The Pioneer Valley Charter School Executive Summary

The Pioneer Valley Charter School will focus on interdisciplinary education and integrating the arts in the basic curriculum for elementary **school K-6 grades**. It will be “developmental” in its understanding of children and interdisciplinary project-oriented in its approach to teaching and learning. We will emphasize both the direct teaching of skills and teaching for the application of skills by organizing theme studies and/or projects relevant to the real world of the student.

We will implement the integration of the arts throughout the curriculum. This focus will serve the needs and learning styles of students in seven kinds of intelligence as identified by Howard Gardner of Harvard, whose advice and support we will seek. Whereas Gardner and his colleagues in the “Project Zero” research have indicated that traditional schools have fostered mainly verbal and mathematical intelligences, we will additionally foster visual, kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences. Talented students who have learning styles and needs not met in the traditional school are often at risk of dropping out. We will develop curriculum, then investigate and document how both the interdisciplinary project approach and the integration of the arts are central to fostering of multiple intelligences.

Our relationship to the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst will enhance our school’s program. We will hire experienced certified teachers who can design theme studies and/or projects using the most recent information on teaching science, technology, math, whole language in reading and writing, social studies, multicultural education, and integrating the arts. Our teachers will be attentive to student’s learning styles, constructivist thinking skills, academic skills, personal skills and relationships, physical development, and creativity in the arts - the whole child’s growth and learning.

Our Learning Theory is consistent with both the theory of multiple intelligences and the psychology of child development. We believe that learning is the discovery of personal meaning. Therefore, the teacher sees the child as an individual and builds on her/his strengths. Constant feedback and support are necessary in this process and are also a way of assessment. We believe that the student’s academic, artistic, social and physical competencies should all be valued. The interdisciplinary project approach to teaching and learning meets students needs for active involvement, learning by doing and solving real problems. We believe that the teacher’s role is to guide and facilitate each student’s growth. We believe that a democratic classroom with shared decision making is important in the learning process. The school will be designed to meet each child’s needs, fostering multicultural understanding and a global perspective.

We will take our outreach and replication function seriously. We will hire a teacher to be Coordinator of the Outreach Program. “Teachers Helping Teachers” will be our thrust. Through workshops, school visits to our school, and consultations, we will join with other public school teachers to take part in the wider school reform movement, both in the Pioneer Valley and beyond. We will design assessment and descriptive studies that document our innovative ways of teaching and learning, and disseminate this information to both parents and other schools.

The Pioneer Valley is an ideal location for such a Charter School. The northern half of the valley is a natural and cultural geographic community. Parents drive from town to town every day, going to work, grocery shopping, going to restaurants, attending cultural events. Our school will be a school of choice for 21 towns, 19 of which are small rural communities with only one elementary and middle school. Our school will offer K-6 for 200 or more students from these towns: Deerfield, Sunderland, Montague, Bernardston, Amherst, Whately, Conway, Ashfield, Shelburne Falls, Buckland, Charlemont, Hawley, Northfield, Colrain, Leverett, Shutesbury, Erving, Gill, Wendell, Hatfield, and Greenfield, none of which have school choice programs.

PART I

1) Mission Statement

A. In succinct terms, describe the core philosophy or underlying purpose of the proposed school.

The Pioneer Valley Charter School's approach to learning and teaching can be described in three ways: developmental; interdisciplinary; and arts-integrated to foster multiple intelligences.

We believe that the developmental approach looks at the whole child and bases educational methods on our knowledge of how children grow and learn, as understood in the Psychology of Child Development. We believe that the school must provide for the growth stages and interaction of all areas of the child's development - social, emotional, physical, aesthetic, moral, and intellectual. Each child comes to school as a whole person.

We believe in an interdisciplinary approach to curriculum design, integrating the "subjects" in projects and theme studies. In this approach, the child's learning is an active process, problem-centered and relevant to the real world. We believe in a balance of two kinds of teaching: direct teaching of skills, and teaching for the application of skills in interdisciplinary projects.

We believe that the arts are ways of knowing and learning, and are an essential part of every child's development. We believe that children are innately creative. Therefore, we will integrate the arts throughout the basic curriculum. This aspect of the school will be informed by Howard Gardner's work at Harvard University, in which he has identified seven kinds of intelligence. Only two kinds of intelligence are emphasized in the traditional school - logical/mathematical and verbal/linguistic. Gardner describes five more kinds of intelligence: visual/spatial, body/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, and two kinds of personal intelligence, interpersonal and intrapersonal. We believe that the interdisciplinary project approach to learning and teaching provides the opportunity for students to use many kinds of intelligence when the arts are integrated in the basic curriculum.

Our mission is to design a school in which we will involve parents, students, teachers and the community in designing curriculum activities that foster the seven kinds of intelligence in children. To this end, we will integrate the arts in the basic curriculum, using teaching /learning methods that are based on sound child development principles. This school will provide an alternative, innovative choice of education methods for students, parents and teachers in 21 towns in the Pioneer Valley . 19 are small towns that have only one elementary school, with no possibility of choice. We recognize the need for choice of different approaches to learning and teaching because students have different learning styles, talents, and strengths in the multiple intelligences. We also see the advantage in demonstrating innovative kinds of teaching and learning in order to contribute to the school reform movement.

B. As a charter school, your school will be a “laboratory of innovation” in the State’s larger education reform effort. With this in mind, what impact do you hope your charter school will have on the state of public education in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts?

We plan for our Charter School to be a model or “laboratory” in the developmental/interdisciplinary approach to learning and teaching, as well as the integration of the arts in the basic curriculum. For this “laboratory” purpose, we will organize an Outreach Program. First, we will start a discourse among teachers from the “sending” schools (18 schools in 15 towns in the Pioneer Valley). We will encourage an exchange of ideas among our teachers and theirs. We will invite them to visit our classes, and we will visit theirs. Seeing a model school in action will have more impact than either reading or hearing about methods. All of the Valley schools have staff development half-days in their calendars. We could offer to have our consultants do workshops for our combined teaching staffs. We could plan shared activities and projects for our students.

We will have a parent committee that helps us with this outreach program. The motto will be “Teachers Helping Teachers.” All teachers have strengths, and this will be an exchange of ideas. We want to foster the attitude that this Charter School is an extension of the services that are offered for parents and teachers and students in the Pioneer Valley. It is a “School of Choice” for all of us, and we should all benefit. This attitude and action should break down the attitude that some now have about Charter Schools “taking away” their funds and students. With that resistance broken down, the sharing of ideas and workshops, and visits to the model school, should encourage others to try new approaches to teaching and learning.

Our impact will be extended beyond the Pioneer Valley through our collaboration with the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts. From the outset, we will have a student teacher in each class. This program will extend the influence of the Charter School on an even wider scale.

Our Parent Committee for Outreach will establish networks and contacts with other school systems in the state, inviting them to visit the school. Our teachers and parents and consultants may organize conferences on school improvement, interdisciplinary education, or arts integration in the curriculum. With a model school to illustrate these teaching/learning methods, the possibilities are endless. We will have a dedicated coalition of parents and teachers, intent on making this an excellent model and helping others achieve improvement in schools. It is our belief that the most effective way to help teachers change is to have other teachers inspire them.

2.) School Objectives:

A. What are the school's broad academic objectives for student learning?

In keeping with the Mission stated above, the school's objectives are related to teaching and learning that has its basis in the psychology of child development, the interdisciplinary approach to curriculum, and the fostering of the seven kinds of intelligence in children.

The following objectives are addressed to these needs in teaching and learning.

The school's broad academic objectives are:

- Two kinds of teaching and learning in the classrooms:
 - direct teaching for learning skills, and
 - teaching in interdisciplinary projects for the application of skills
- Teaching for diverse learning styles, suitable for different intelligences and strengths
- Students' learning to use many sources of information:
 - Textbooks, references and encyclopedias, literature
 - Technology; the computer and Internet, with which students can access and exchange information with students all over the U.S.A. & world
 - The community - use of the local environment for studies, field trips
- Students' learning to communicate
(using different ways of knowing, learning and expressing ideas derived from the 7 kinds of intelligence identified by Howard Gardner of Harvard, as listed above):
 - writing, speaking, reading
 - learning a foreign language
 - inquiry and critical thinking in science
 - mathematical/logical thinking
 - problem solving in the project approach
 - cooperative learning
 - expressing and appreciating music
 - expressing ideas in the visual/spatial arts
 - expressing ideas in movement and creative dramatics
 - understanding his/her own and others' cultures
 - appreciating diversity in social studies
 - learning how to use maps, graphs, charts, indexes
 - learning from history
 - attaining a global perspective

B. Describe any non-academic goals for student performance.

Opportunities to develop the student's interpersonal intelligence and intrapersonal intelligence, as defined by Howard Gardner, are given in the interdisciplinary project approach to teaching/learning, as specifically expressed in the following activities that are a part of every classroom project:

The school's non-academic goals are:

- The Social Curriculum in which the student:
 - has a good self concept, confidence
 - listens to and respects others
 - works cooperatively with others

- Is a democratic participant in the group
- Has a sense of community in the classroom and school
- Plans own time and materials in interdisciplinary projects
- Does shared decision-making in class planning for projects
- Makes choices, carries them out
- Is self motivated, has initiative
- Takes responsibility for self, others
- Is able to express feelings
- Can express feelings and ideas in many art forms
- Is a creative thinker, uses imagination
- Develops individual talents, builds on strengths
- Takes risks, evaluates alternatives
- Is able to work on a team
- Seeks information, has a love of learning
- Is a critical thinker
- Is developing skills for participation in a democratic society

3.) Statement of Need:

A. Why is there a need for this type of school?

1.) We recognize the need for choice of different approaches to learning and teaching because students have different learning styles, talents, and strengths in the multiple intelligences as identified by Howard Gardner of Harvard. 2.) We also see the need for reaching out to other teachers in other public schools in the Pioneer Valley, to cooperate in developing new approaches to curriculum.

As one father living in the Pioneer Valley has stated “ Most business leaders agree that today’s educational systems fails to produce the type of independent, dynamic, self-starter they are looking for”. He also states “ The most difficult hurdle today in education is motivation. Integrated learning addresses this problem head on.” Our plans for an integrated, interdisciplinary project based approach to education are explained in detail in section 10, Educational Program, in this application.

This Charter School will serve 21 towns in the Pioneer Valley that have no school choice. 19 of these towns are small rural communities with only one elementary school and no possibility of setting up another kind of school to give choice of educational methods to students, parents, and teachers. In some of these schools, a few teachers have begun to change their methods, but the traditional classroom is the dominant structure in many schools in this area. Traditional classrooms often do not meet the needs of children who have different learning styles and talents.

B. Explain why the charter school model would be an appropriate vehicle to address this need.

If a child has a particular learning style, talent or need, or has outstanding strengths in one or more of the seven intelligences, there is no alternative for the parent who thinks the child would benefit from a different approach to learning and teaching. Most of the schools in the 21 towns are traditional in their teaching styles addressing only verbal and mathematical intelligences. Our Charter school will also provide for the development of musical intelligence, visual/spatial intelligence, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences, and kinesthetic/ bodily intelligence. The Pioneer Valley Charter School educational program, as described in section 10 of this application, shows how our interdisciplinary project approach meets the needs of students’ seven kinds of intelligences.

Also, the founding coalition of this Charter School is highly motivated to assist other schools, parents and community supporters in understanding school improvement. From the beginning, we are going to set up a school that has the developmental/ interdisciplinary approach to learning and teaching. We are going to hire teachers who have the aptitude and interest in this way of teaching. Therefore, we will immediately be able to help other teachers and parents see how such a school or classroom operates. On the other hand, in other schools, where teachers have been operating in a traditional way, it takes a great deal of time for teachers to change.

We will immediately start an Outreach Program as described above, working with teachers in other schools to design new approaches to curriculum for their school and ours. The opportunity for teachers to exchange ideas will be more effective than simply hearing or reading about new approaches in teaching.

4.) Profile of Founding Coalition

A. Describe the make-up of the group or partnership that is working together to apply for a charter, including the names of the founders and their background and experiences.

The following people are working together to apply for the charter and found the school. We now have a Steering Committee and several consultants. Eventually we plan to have a Board of Trustees, an Advisory Board, and a Coalition of Community Supporters. We also plan to have several business/school partnerships, museum/school partnerships and science center/school partnerships. At present, the following people are supporting the founding of the school:

(1) The Charter is being applied for by two certified teachers:

Marianne E. Everett, Ed.D. - Mass, Certificate # 259279
Certified as Classroom teacher, K - 8
Supervisor, K - 8
Elementary Principal, K - 8

Helen L. Gibson, M.Ed. - Mass. Certificate # 0257057
Certified as teacher of science, grades 7 - 12
Chemistry, Biology and General Science

Marianne Everett has been a classroom teacher (K - 4), Elementary Principal and College Assistant Professor of Education.

Helen Gibson has been a teacher of science in Middle School, High School and College. She is now a teacher educator in the PALMS Program, giving workshops for public school teachers in Massachusetts on inquiry-based learning, for teachers of English, Social Studies, Science, Home Economics and Health.

(2) Advisory Board (Community members are still being added to this Board)

Janice Weeks, M.A., M.S., Board of Directors, Mohawk Trail Concerts
Formerly Head of Related Arts Department, Mohawk Regional High School

Ann Lanning, Assistant Curator for Interpretation, Historic Deerfield

Timothy Neuman, Executive Director, Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association

Kathy Jaworski, Director,
Franklin Community Development Corporation (Parent)

Dorothy Arsenault, Secretary, Family Counseling Service (Parent)

Gerald Jacobsen, Cannon Copiers (Parent)

Susan Jacobsen, Gentle Care Center, former P.T.O. President (Parent)

John Tristan, Director, Durfee Conservatory, Univ. of Massachusetts (Parent)

(3) Steering Committee

The following people are serving on the Steering Committee:

Nancy Winter, M.Ed.

Coordinator, Early Childhood Education Department
Greenfield Community College

Harvey Scribner, Ed.D.

Professor Emeritus, School of Education,
University of Massachusetts/ Amherst
Formerly Commissioner of Education for the State of Vermont
Formerly Workshop Leader, Massachusetts Principals Association

Richard Konicek, Ed.D.

Professor, Math/Science/Technology Program, School of Education,
University Massachusetts/Amherst
School Consultant, PALMS Program for State Department of Education
(Partners for Learning Math and Science)
Workshop Leader, Massachusetts Principals Association
Formerly Science Consultant, Greenwich, Conn. Public Schools

Helen L. Gibson, M.Ed.

Ed.D. Candidate School of Education, Math, Science and
Instructional Technology Program, University of Massachusetts/Amherst
School Consultant, PALMS Program for State Department of Education,
(Partners for Learning Math and Science)
College Instructor for the School of Nursing's TAP Program,
University of Massachusetts/Amherst
Formerly Classroom Teacher, 7th and 8th grade

Marianne E. Everett, Ed.D., Coordinator

Award for Outstanding Research in Teacher Education, Association of
Deans of Schools of Education in Land Grant Colleges and Universities, 1989
Formerly Noyes Foundation Fellow and teacher of Social Studies
course, Interdisciplinary Teacher Education Program, School of
Education, University of Massachusetts/Amherst
Formerly Assistant Professor, College of Charleston, S.C.
Formerly Classroom Teacher, K-4th Grade
Formerly Elementary Principal

(4) Consultants

We will have a part-time consultant staff to work with the teachers in the Pioneer Valley Charter School. So far, the following consultants have agreed:

Technology Consultant

Diana Campbell, Ed.D., Technology Advisor for a Public School System
Formerly Classroom Teacher in Grades 1,3,4,5,6.
Workshop Leader for Five College Partnership
Workshop Leader for K - 12 Internet (Telecommunications), University of Massachusetts/ Amherst

Social Studies Consultant

Barbara Rothenberg, M.A., CAGS, 2nd Grade teacher in Public School
Formerly taught grades 5 and 6 in Public School
American Teacher Award presented by Walt Disney, Inc., 1994
(one of 5 teachers in the U.S. in Early Childhood Education)
Massachusetts Social Studies Teacher of the Year, 1993
World of Difference Teacher Award by Anti-Defamation League, 1992
United Nations World Children's Day Foundation, Honorable Mention
for Human Relations Curriculum with global focus

Creative Arts Consultant

Norma Kent, Ed.D.
Faculty, Leslie College, Boston, MA, Masters Degree Outreach Program,
Creative Arts in Learning
Formerly, Coordinator for Arts Partnership Program,
Deerfield, MA Public Schools
Formerly, Noyes Foundation Fellow and teacher of course on
Interdisciplinary Arts in Curriculum, University of Massachusetts.
Formerly, Faculty, Centenary College, N.J.

Science Consultant

Richard Konicek, Ed.D., Professor, University of Massachusetts/ Amherst
Math, Science, Technology Program, School of Education
(See Steering Committee listing above for background)

Other Consultants will be added to this list. Their work will be on-going in the school.

B. Discuss how the group came together, as well as any partnership arrangements with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, non-profits, or any other entities or groups.

(1) How the group came together:

Initially, a group of parents and teachers who live in the small towns in the Pioneer Valley came together to consider establishing a Charter School that would foster the seven intelligences as identified by Howard Gardner of Harvard. This would mean a greater infusion of the arts in the curriculum than traditional school. Also, we are interested in a more relevant education for our children, which would come from the interdisciplinary project approach. Some of us have

worked together at the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, as professors, graduate students. As parents and teachers, we are familiar with the public schools in the Pioneer Valley. We realize the need for a school of choice for parents and students in the many small rural towns in the area, most of which have only one elementary school.

In November, 1994, Marianne Everett met with Harvey Scribner, Helen Gibson, Dick Konicek, and Nancy Winter. They agreed to be on the Steering Committee and begin to build a Founding Coalition. Marianne Everett agreed to serve as Coordinator. Their backgrounds are given above in # 4 - A. Consultants who have agreed to work with the teachers in the school are listed there also.

The response to our initial publicity and outreach activities have been gratifying. Over 60 community members have responded favorably to establishing the the Pioneer Valley Charter School in the Deerfield area. We are now forming an Advisory Board of community leaders and establishing school/museum and school/business partnerships.

(2) Partnerships:

We will have business/school partnerships and partnerships with the following arts and science agencies in the Pioneer Valley; a representative of each will be on our Advisory Board.

Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association - School/Museum Partnership established
Historic Deerfield Museum - School/Museum Partnership established
Pioneer Valley Symphony Orchestra
Pioneer Valley Music School
Mohawk Trail Concerts - School/Music Partnership established
Hitchcock Center for the Environment - School/Science Partnership established
Audubon Society/Acadia Wildlife Sanctuary - School/ Science Partnership established
U. of Mass. Greenhouse, Durfee Conservatory - School/Science Partnership established

(3) Parents and Community Members:

The following parents and business community members have endorsed the idea for a Pioneer Valley Charter School. They will be in our Coalition of Community Supporters. This group will increase.

*Parents

*Francie Garanin
*Jim Garanin
*Michael Edelstein, Attorney
*Alan Stefanini, M.D.
*Dianne Bensen
*Georgie Swinerton, teacher
*Doug Jenest, teacher
*Vick Kozera, teacher
*Nancy Edelstein
*Rebecca Schaefer, teacher
* John Tristan, teacher
Michael Edelstein, Attorney

Business Community

*Kathy Jaworski - Franklin Community
Development Corporation
*Marie Bete, Channing Bete Inc.
*Gerald Jacobson - Cannon Copiers
*Susan Jacobsen - Gentle Care Center (Day Care)
*Donna & Jan Kusnick - Benchmark Real Estate
* Carl & Louise Belcher - Martha Adele's
Harriet Sternberg, Social Worker
Cheri & Barry Oberpreller, Expressions in Light
*Doreen Avery, Court Probation Dept.
*William W. Gibson III, Youth Coordinator
*Dorothy Arsenault, Secretary, Family Counseling
Ann Higgins & Keith Babbit, Still Here Farm

(4) Fund Raising Committee

The Fund Raising Committee has the initial members below. Others will be added as our plans develop.

Helen Gibson - has written and secured grants for Earth Day Curriculum, Girl Scouts music projects, Greenfield School System Cooperative Library Workshop, etc.

Marianne Everett - has written and secured grants for teacher training workshops, parent education meetings and workshops, a program of six graduate fellowships in teacher education

William W. Gibson - writes and secures grants for Christian Youth Education, the Just Peace Program

C. Include any plans for further recruitment of founders or organizers of the school.

We will continue to add members to our coalition as we do the marketing outlined in section 6. We are now having several articles about the filing of our application appear in newspapers, with a gratifying response.

We will have many more members on the Advisory Board, Board of Trustees and Coalition of Community Supporters. We are now contacting local leaders and officials, business men and community leaders. We will add more parents in the Founding Coalition as our plans progress.

We are in the process of establishing potential school/business partnerships. Several school/museum partnerships and school/science center partnerships have already been established. (See B, 2 and 3 above).

5) School Demographics:

A. Describe the area where the school will be located.

The school will be located in South Deerfield, in the Pioneer Valley. It will serve as a school of choice for 21 towns that are close to each other. People who live in the valley are used to driving from town to town, going to work, grocery shopping, going to restaurants and finding entertainment of their choice. They would willingly drive in car pools to send their children to a school of choice. 19 of these are rural towns, with populations of around 2,000 to 5,000. Two of the towns, Amherst and Greenfield, have populations of about 22,000. About a third of the households have incomes in the low to moderate range. The population of these towns is a mix of farming families and families that have come to the area more recently because of the colleges in the area, which give employment for many kinds of skills and professions. The area has many small businesses, with a few national headquarters for larger businesses.

The towns to be served by the school are in Franklin and Hampshire Counties.

They are: Shelburne Falls, Charlemont, Gill, Northfield, Bernardston, Montague, Amherst, Sunderland, Whately, Deerfield, Conway, Leverett, Colrain, Hatfield, Greenfield, Ashfield, Buckland, Hawley, Shutesbury, Erving, and Wendell.

All but two towns (Amherst and Greenfield) have only one elementary school. None of the towns offer choice in their school systems.

B. Why was this location selected?

South Deerfield is the center of a circle including 21 towns in the upper Pioneer Valley within easy commuting distance from each other. It is between Amherst and Greenfield, the two towns with about 22,000 people where there are shops and services. The 19 towns are rural, with about 200 to 5000 population. South Deerfield offers an ideal location for the school, blending the rural influence with the cultural resources of the larger towns. A suitable building is available in South Deerfield. (See the building description in Section C of this application.)

C. Describe the unique character of the student population to be served.

We expect a good mix of different social and economic backgrounds in the **school**.

We expect the student population to come from the families from many cultures and ethnic origins that live in the valley. There is a mix of old farming families and new intellectuals who attend the colleges in the area. There are many small businesses, artists, self-employed and professional people in the area, with a few large national businesses.

D. What is the school's expected enrollment?

We hope to open in Sept. 1996 with an enrollment of 100 students. The next year we will admit 50 additional students, bringing the total to 150. The third year, we will admit 50 more students bringing the total enrollment to 200 students.

E. What grade levels will be served?

We will serve grades Kindergarten through 6th grade (K-6). We will have some multi-age grouping and some age-grade classes, depending in teacher preference and enrollment levels. Each group will have 20 children, with one head teacher and one college student intern, a ratio of 10 students to one teacher.

6.) Recruiting & Marketing Plan

A. Demonstrate how you will publicize the school to attract a diverse pool of applicants.

Articles are appearing in 3 newspapers, the Greenfield Recorder and the Hampshire Gazette, and the Springfield Union. These are widely read papers in the 21 towns. (Copies of the articles are enclosed.) We have had a positive response from our initial efforts to organize and publicize the school. 60 community members - parents, business people, the arts and museum community, and teachers have responded favorably to the idea of the school.

As soon as the charter is assured, we will further publicize the school. First, we will write a story for the leading newspapers in the area. We will hold community meetings in the various towns served by the school. This will give us more newspaper coverage. We will also publicize the Pioneer Valley's Charter School mission on the local radio and television stations. We will prepare a small brochure to give to local libraries, 4-H clubs, YMCA's, agricultural fairs, Family Centers and Head Start Programs, and youth services such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, and the Big Sister/Big Brother programs.

We have already begun to contact the local Superintendents of Schools and Principals in various towns, to build good will and a cooperative attitude.

B. What type of outreach will be made to potential students and their families?

The above plan for publicizing will disseminate information to potential students and their families. When parents express interest in the school, we will send out and receive the initial admissions packets and applications, which will include information describing the philosophy and curriculum plans for the school. We will continue to hold monthly community meetings to get parent and community input. When the building is ready, visits will be arranged for potential parents and community members.

In addition to the community outreach described above in section 6 A, which we will continue, we will also send information to the place where you find most parents, both mothers and fathers, today - the local businesses. In most families today, both parents are working. Therefore, we will send out information suitable for posting on employee bulletin boards and putting in company newsletters.

7. Admissions Policy:

A. Describe the admission method and standards you will use to select students.

The admissions committee will be made up of parents, teachers, and the Coordinator. They will recommend applicants and make up class lists. The final decisions will be made by the Board of Trustees and the Coordinator. The admissions committee will send and receive applications and interview prospective candidates.

The admissions policy of the Pioneer Valley Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, national or ethnic origin, academic performance, athletic ability, proficiency in English, special needs or disabilities.

We will endeavor to have a balanced enrollment as to :

- a balance and diversity in race
- a diversity in socioeconomic background
- an appropriate child/adult ratio
- a balance in each class of boys/girls and ages
- an appropriate match between student and school, considering the child's previous experiences, needs, the class needs, and services available in the school.

After the first year, priority will be given to siblings of children already attending the school.

At admission time, the parents will be advised that there will be a suggested work requirement by parents of a certain number of hours per month, but this is not mandatory in extenuating circumstances. All parents should help in their child's classrooms at some time. Other work may be taking a group of students on field trips, Saturday clean-ups programs involving parents and students, office support, fund raising, outreach committee, admission committee, and other committees and projects.

When a student with special needs or disabilities applies, we will have a conference with his or her parents and the sending school officials to determine in which school the child's best interest would be served.

B. Describe the process and timetable to be used for admitting students, including a plan for the admission lottery for students both within and outside of the district.

There will be two priorities as soon as we are chartered - securing the building (including raising the necessary funds) and beginning to do more widespread marketing and recruitment activities, as described in section 6 above. A brochure describing the school, and application blanks, will be printed at that time also. These will be sent to all parents who request them.

Our timetable for the actual school opening is September 1996, since we have to raise funds to buy and renovate the building. Therefore, we will plan to actively interview and decide on admissions in a time frame from January 2 to April 15, 1996. If the Board of Trustees thinks we should start

earlier, we will. It would be a great advantage if parents could visit the school site when they apply, if it is ready.

If more students apply than the school capacity, we will initiate a lottery system. We will require data on the child in addition to the application blank -such as past test scores, recommendations from teachers, etc. The basis for the final decisions on admissions will be the criteria for a balanced curriculum given in section 7A above.

C. Explain how these policies further the mission of the school in a non-discriminatory fashion.

In making up class lists, we would abide by the guidelines for a balanced enrollment described in section 7A above. This does not discriminate but gives a balance to the school community that would be similar to a public schools in this area.

In keeping with our stated mission and objectives (see sections 2A & B in this application), our school will emphasize the teaching of the arts throughout the basic curriculum, in order to foster the seven kinds of intelligence as identified by Howard Gardner of Harvard. Therefore, if a teacher in another school or a parent recommends a child whose outstanding talents have already been identified, and who could benefit from our school's special focus, such application would receive special consideration.

The suggested work requirement for parents will not exclude anyone whose circumstances make it a problem for them. There are a variety of other ways the parent could help the school, such as typing to be done at home, or taking turns with a car pool, etc. We would be flexible in the parent/work requirement.

The school will be nondiscriminatory as to students with disabilities, within our capacity to meet their needs. Many special needs children have benefited in the past in a school setting such as ours. However, since we will not have the resources in specialized district personal of the usual public school, admission would be unfair to some students. When a student with disabilities applies, we will have a 3-way conference with his or her parents and the sending school's officials to determine which school setting would best meet the student's particular needs.

8.) Timetable:

Provide a detailed timetable of projected steps and dates leading to the opening of a charter school.

November 21, 1991: Preliminary Charter School Application Submitted, Founding Coalition being formed and organized. Two sites being investigated.

February 15, 1995: Final Charter School Application deadline.

March 15, 1995: Charter grant determined.

March-May 1995: When granted charter, we will proceed as follows:

Publicizing in area towns as described in application.
Fund Raising Committee begins seeking grants and donations.
Building Committee makes preliminary plans, consults architect
Architect's plans drawn, contractor's work begun. Preliminary inspections and advice from Building Dept., Fire Dept, etc.

April -Dec. 1995

Fund raising, building purchase and renovation will take several months.
Monthly meetings for community involvement and for admissions outreach

Sept. 1996 -Recruitment of teachers begins.

Jan. 15, 1996

Admissions begun for fall 1996.

April 15, 1996: Admissions completed for fall, 1996

August 23, 1996: Teacher Training Week -Faculty planning

- Teachers and consultants involved in planning of learning program.
- Curriculum frameworks, goals and objectives agreed upon.
- Class parents plan with teachers for parent involvement.
- Classroom learning centers set up.
- Assessment plans made.
- Parent-teacher organization started.
- All committees make plans for first semester.

September 1, 1996: School opens.

9. Evidence of Support:

A. Try to convey as clearly as possible the scope of community backing for the proposed charter school.

Our initial efforts to build a Coalition of Community Supporters have been very successful. Everyone to whom we have explained the mission of the Charter School has agreed to support it. Some have agreed to serve in certain ways - see those listed above in section 4 who have evidenced support: the Steering Committee, Advisory Board, Consultants, Parents and people from the Business Community. The scope of the community backing is also seen in the fact that these initial supporters live in many of the towns that our school will serve in the Pioneer Valley. We have been in contact with about 60 people in this short time. This enthusiastic initial support is encouraging. Building the Coalition of Community Supporters in the Pioneer Valley is an on-going process, now in the initial stages of planning.

B. In tangible terms, such as a survey or letters of support, demonstrate this community support among teachers, parents, students, community leaders and others.

From the 60 people who have expressed support verbally, we have received 15 letters of support so far. Copies are enclosed. We will forward other copies to you if any more should come in.

Support from the National Education Community

A very encouraging evidence of support is indicated in the response from two important professional resources. We have had conversations with Howard Gardner's Program Director, Liz Rosenblatt at Harvard and with David Feldman at Tufts. Both have said that we may state in this application that we will have continuing conversations pursuant to working together to design curriculum that fosters the seven intelligences and to access such programs. Howard Gardner is now on sabbatical, so formal arrangements will have to come later.

10. Educational Program:

A. Describe the educational program of the school, providing a detailed overview of curriculum objectives and content in the main subject areas.

Our school is founded on the three basic approaches described in the mission statement i.e., the Developmental approach to growth and learning, the Interdisciplinary approach to curriculum design, and the integration of arts into the curriculum in order to foster the seven kinds of intelligences as described by Howard Gardner. Today's research on how children learn (or cognitive science) calls for the learning of skills within the context of real experiences or projects. "Developmental" refers to the child's stages of growth and learning styles as an individual, whole child. "Interdisciplinary" refers to a method of organizing the curriculum around projects which integrate the subjects in learning activities that are relevant to the real world of the child.

In our program, the teachers, parents and Coordinator will plan our design for a "Workshop Classroom" in which there are two kinds of learning and teaching:

- (1) Systematic instruction in skills.
- (2) Interdisciplinary project work for the application of skills.

What skills shall we teach?

We believe students need a new kind of school environment which prepares them for the real world and the new workplace of today and tomorrow. Our belief is based on the Secretary of Labor's Report, "The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills", or the SCANS Report (1992), which states that there is now a new kind of workplace for which traditional education does not prepare our students. Today in the business world, "Work is problem-oriented, flexible, and organized in teams..." (SCANS Report, p. 3). Workers today need to be able to work in teams, seek out new information, use technology, make decisions and solve problems. SCANS calls this "the emerging, high-performance workplace." (Learning a Living, SCANS, 1992, p. 12).

Students can best learn these behaviors and skills in the Interdisciplinary Project approach to teaching and learning. When planning and carrying out projects in the classroom, students practice the very skills that SCANS calls for. Skills of many kinds are needed by today's student, much more than the narrow "3 R's" focus of the traditional school. The SCANS report states the need for:

Basic skills (Reading, writing, mathematics, and listening and speaking skills)
Personal skills (responsibility, self-management, sociability, self esteem, integrity)
Thinking skills (creative thinking, decision-making, problem solving, reasoning, ability to learn) (SCANS Report, p. 12)

Other competencies are designated by the SCANS Report as important for students to learn if they are to succeed in the new workplace. They list such activities as finding and organizing new data, interpreting and communicating information, using and applying technology.

How shall we teach these skills and competencies?

All of the skills and competencies called for by the SCANS Report, for future success in the workplace, are taught and learned in the Interdisciplinary project approach to implementing curriculum. Skills taught in the daily morning reading class, math class, etc. are applied and reinforced in the afternoon in "Project Time," a large block of time set aside for the application of

skills in interdisciplinary projects. Twentieth century research on thinking and learning, or cognitive science, shows that students learn best when given concrete materials in the context of an activity or project that is related to real life. Mere mastery of information is not enough; it must be related to life and problem solving in projects and activities. Skills cannot be taught in isolation. They must be applied in projects and activities.

Curriculum objectives and content

We will summarize here the approach to teaching and the content as far as attitudes and actions are concerned. Teachers will design specific interdisciplinary projects based on the scope and sequence of each curriculum area, as suitable for the level of their students. To guide the teachers, the Board of Trustees and the Coordinator are recommending certain leading books on each curriculum area as "Guide books for teachers." The teachers working together with parents and the Coordinator will plan specific classroom learning activities for each class.

Arts Integration in the Basic Curriculum

The infusion of the arts throughout the curriculum will carry out our mission and objectives related to child development, the interdisciplinary project approach, and the fostering of seven kinds of intelligence, as stated in the beginning pages of this application. Every child in the school will be given many opportunities for experiences in the arts, such as creative dance, creative dramatics, visual arts, sculpture, music. We believe all these art expressions are necessary for the whole child's growth.

The arts in the seven intelligences

In this school, the arts will be seen as ways of communicating ideas, ways of thinking. Expression and appreciation in all these art disciplines will develop each student's seven kinds of intelligence, as identified by Howard Gardner of Harvard.

There is interaction in these arts, but the broad categories are as follows:

1. The visual /spatial intelligence is expressed in drawing and painting, sculpture in clay and other media, building models, etc.
2. The kinesthetic/bodily intelligence is expressed in creative movement and dance, creative dramatics, learning folk dances related to a country or period in history, etc.
3. The musical intelligence is expressed in singing and playing musical instruments, creating original compositions, listening to and appreciating a wide variety of music.
4. The linguistic/verbal intelligence is expressed in creative writing, writing poetry, and enjoying reading many kinds of literature, and acting in dramatics.
5. The logical intelligence is expressed in many of the arts, such as designing activities, or structure and balance in writing and poetry. It is necessary in understanding musical notations, for instance.
6. The interpersonal intelligence is expressed in cooperating with others in planning and carrying out creative projects, shared decision making, and contributing to a democratic classroom.
7. The intrapersonal intelligence is expressed in the understanding of self and self-reflection that come when expressing original ideas, creating works of art, and making individual contributions to group projects.

Integrating the arts in the curriculum is also consistent with our school's stated mission and objectives regarding basing our school practices on the Psychology of Child Development.

We believe the arts are necessary for the growth and development of the whole child, as follows:

1. Intellectual development (expressing ideas in many art forms, original and critical thinking).
2. Emotional development (expressing feelings, intuition, imagination, the senses).
3. Physical and psycho-motor development (expressing ideas through dance, movement, drama).
4. Social development (communicating to others through many art forms, planning and sharing decision-making with others and cooperating in carrying out art activities in interdisciplinary projects).

How the arts will be integrated in the basic curriculum:

Integrating the arts is an innovative way to teach and learn. By contrast, in the traditional school, students would be limited to reading textbooks, such as social studies or science, learning new vocabulary, answering questions, and taking a test on the subject matter.

On the other hand, in our Arts-Integrated School, the arts are seen as creative ways for students to think and express ideas. The student will use art processes to learn and communicate ideas as naturally as they learn to use books, paper and pencil. We feel that the arts are necessary in a sound academic program.

In our school there will be times in the daily and weekly school schedule for two aspects of arts integration: 1. Art classes in each art discipline, as pure arts experiences, once or twice a week (music classes, visual/spatial arts classes, creative dance and creative drama classes). 2. Arts in each classroom, every day, taught by the classroom teacher and often a part of their interdisciplinary projects.

Arts in Each Classroom:

There will be an Arts Area in the corner of every classroom. These will contain a variety of art materials on open shelves, readily available to students. There will be a "Choice Time" every day, when individual children can choose what to do. Some will choose to paint a picture, model in clay, etc. Others may choose to read a book or practice their math. The teacher will also plan large blocks of time (such as two hours periods, several times a week) for "Project Time". This is when on-going interdisciplinary projects are done.

The arts may be incorporated into studies in many ways. For example;

- a) When studying geometry and geometrical shapes, the students may design stained glass windows using those shapes.
- b) When studying scale and ratios in math, they may reproduce cartoons to scale or make scale drawings for bird houses they design and build.
- c) When students in fourth grade are studying life in the desert, one group of students might choose to communicate their learning by painting a mural showing the plants and animals that live in the desert.
- d) Some Social Studies Interdisciplinary Projects are more involved and take a long time. When third grade students are studying the history of this area of the state, the teacher might plan an interdisciplinary project on the Native Americans of the Pocumtuck Valley that would last several weeks. She would plan with the Pocumtuck Valley Historical Society's museum director, with whom we have established a School/Museum partnership. The students would take a trip to the Memorial Hall in Deerfield to see Indian Artifacts found in this area. In the classroom, the students might construct a

small replica of the kind of summer fishing camp the Native Americans had on the banks of the Deerfield River. In this activity, they would use measurement and building to a scale. They might also construct a model of a teepee big enough for several children to get into. Their studies would include such hands-on activities as making clay pots, weaving, learning Native American dances and music, cooking Native American food. They might study the plants that the Native Americans introduced to the colonists, such as corn. They might grind corn the Native American way and make "Indian Pudding", a favorite food to this day. The students would do wide reading for information in carrying out their individual and group projects. They would write both reports of information and creative stories and poems, which they would bind into their own books and illustrate. A Native American living in the area would be invited to visit the class and give information to the students. They might do an original piece of creative dramatics and give the production for their parents and other classes in the school. They might video tape their production, making a "movie" of their play. This interdisciplinary project on Native Americans in the Pioneer Valley would integrate the subjects, applying the skills of Reading, Writing, Math, Science, Social Studies and the arts - the visual/spatial arts, music and dance, creative dramatics and the crafts of weaving and pottery making. This is how the project time in the schedule allows for the application of skills in interdisciplinary projects relevant to the area in which the child now lives.

Art Classes in Each Art Discipline

Creative Movement and Dance

In all classes, K-6, there will be classes in creative rhythmic movement and dance. These will be taught by a dance specialist. Also, the study of dance will be integrated in the interdisciplinary projects as appropriate. For example, when studying American history and early American life in Historic Deerfield (with which the school has established a school/museum partnership), the students will learn folk dances and reels of the period. When studying the ethnic groups that settled our area, the students will learn Polish polkas (the school has established a school/museum partnership with the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Society for input on ethnic studies). All students in the school will have the opportunity for developing their kinesthetic/bodily intelligence through self expression in creative dance.

Visual/Spatial Arts

Students will have constant access to visual arts materials in the Arts Centers in each classroom. The Arts will be incorporated into interdisciplinary projects, as described above. In addition, there will be classes taught by a visual arts specialist once or twice a week. These lessons will include such art processes as drawing, painting, collage, clay modeling, sculpture, constructing models, papier mache, puppet making. Crafts such as weaving, pottery, etc. will also be taught. There will be frequent opportunities for self expression by individual students in every classroom.

Music

Emphasis will be put on all children's experiencing the joy of music. There will be times for group singing every day in every classroom. In addition, a music specialist will teach a school chorus group for talented students. Also, every child will be given the opportunity to play one or more musical instruments, beginning with the Orf Instruments in the Kindergarten and progressing to orchestral instruments in later years. When we discover that a student has particular talent in

music, extra instruction will be given to that student, and they may play in ensembles. Beginning composition may be taught to such students. Suzuki Violin lessons will be available for children whose parents want to give the parent participation as required by the Suzuki method. All children will also be given the opportunity to develop their appreciation and understanding by listening to a wide variety of music.

Creative Dramatics

There will be times in the schedule for all each class to work with a specialist in Creative Dramatics. She/he will also consult with the teacher so that this important activity can continue in the classroom. Creative drama often begins with a story from Children's Literature, or it may be a story the children have written. The teacher first discusses the characters and plot with the children, through such questions as: How would the old man walk? How would he talk? What would he say then? The children take turns "acting out" their concept of the character. In this way, the characters come to life and the plot develops from the children's own creative concepts of the story. The children may work like this on a creative play for many weeks. Eventually, they decide which children should be give which parts in the final production, and they work on painting settings and making costumes (often with parents' help). They may also video tape their completed play, making a "movie" of it, dubbing in background music. A creative drama brought to this point would be produced for parents to come and see. There would also be a great deal of improvisation, based on other stories, going on in the classroom frequently. This is an important art form for children with strength in the kinesthetic/bodily intelligence.

Guidebooks for teachers:

Lowenfeld, V. and Brittain, W.L. Creative and Mental Growth Seventh Edition. New York, Macmillan, 1982.

Emma Sheehy. There's Music in Children New York, Teachers College Press.

Geraldine B. Sikes, Creative Dramatics, New York, Teachers College Press.

Multicultural Education throughout the curriculum

Multicultural education is an approach to education that empowers students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to participate in a democratic society. This will be accomplished in the Pioneer Valley Charter School by designing our classroom to be more democratic. We will have regular morning meetings where students can participate in shared decision making and are given choices. Democratic classrooms foster the development of more enlightened, creative, and analytical students, who are more capable of weighing alternative perspectives. Diverse or alternative perspectives provide new ways to view events and situations, to solve problems, and view our relationship within the global community. Students who develop cross cultural competence are better equipped to live in an increasingly multiethnic world.

The curriculum will study events, concepts and issues from a range of diverse perspectives that reflect the diversity of our society. For example: Students studying the history of the Pioneer Valley would be given the opportunity to understand both the point of view of the English settlers and the Native Americans that lived here at the time of their arrival. This could be explored through reading documentary accounts, creative drama, storytelling, and arts and crafts projects related to both the Native Americans and the settlers ways of life. We would invite local Native Americans to come into our classrooms to talk to our children.

The overall goal of multicultural education is for all students to develop their potential for full participation in a democratic society. This means that students will learn how to analyze and take social action against social inequalities to create a more just society.

Multicultural education ensures that all students have the self-esteem and motivation to succeed academically in a pluralistic society composed of diverse ethnic, cultural and racial groups, which must occur for survival of humans on this planet.

Guidebook for teachers:

Banks, J.A. Teaching Strategies for Ethnic Studies, Fifth Edition. Boston, Allyn and Bacon, 1991.

Science Teaching and Learning

There will be a science corner in every classroom, stocked with many science materials for active learning. Science will be incorporated in interdisciplinary projects. Major emphasis will be: Authentic science investigations. Learning science skills, which are observing, classifying, predicting, measuring, inferring, and communicating. Both independent and cooperative learning in small groups. Thinking skills and process skills, such as acquiring and processing data, analyzing data, constructing graphs and tables, and reporting findings.

Guidebooks for teachers:

Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Science and Technology
Malden, MA, Massachusetts Department of Education, 1994.

Funk, H.J. et al. Learning Science Process Skills, Second Edition. Dubuque, Iowa, Kendall-Hunt Publishing Company, 1985.

Mathematics

Concept development and thinking skills through use of a variety of math materials. Math learning center in every classroom. Individualized teaching of the sequence of math skills. Students will have the opportunity to work both individually and in small groups. The teacher will make individual packets for the child according to his/her stage of progress in understanding math concepts. Integrating math in interdisciplinary projects as appropriate.

Guidebooks for teachers:

Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Mathematics Malden, MA,
Massachusetts Department of Education, 1994.

Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics Reston, VA,
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 1989.

Burns, M. About Teaching Mathematics, a K - 12 Resource White Plains, N.Y.,
Math Solutions Publications, 1992.

Lorton, M.L. Mathematics Their Way Reading MA, Addison-Wesley, 1976.

Social Studies

We will have project approaches to learning and teaching. Shared decision making, planning, problem solving information gathering, reporting and communicating information to others. Cooperative learning strategies. Learning and applying skills in the context of activities related to the real world of the student. Interdisciplinary projects. The diverse perspectives needed for life in a multicultural world. The application of the skills in interdisciplinary projects with a social studies theme is described in the section on "Arts in the Classroom" above.

Guidebooks for teachers:

Michailis, J.U. Social Studies for Children: A Guide to Basic Instruction. Seventh Edition, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice Hall, 1980.

Banks, J.A. Teaching Strategies for Ethnic Studies Needham Heights, MA. Allyn and Bacon, 1991.

Reading and Writing

We will have several approaches in every classroom: the Whole Language approach, including process writing; an Individualized Reading approach; and Reading based on Children's Literature. In the Whole Language approach, the child's speaking, writing and reading are connected. This begins in Kindergarten when the child is encouraged to tell stories about his/her drawings and paintings and the teacher writes them down. As one Kindergartner said, "Oh, I see, reading is talk 'wrote' down." Also, the class makes up original stories together. In the early grades, children write their own stories and they begin to read their own writing. In later grades, students write stories, then illustrate and bind them in the classroom - they "publish" their own books and put them on the library shelf for others to read. In the "Process Writing" approach, the teacher schedules a writing workshop time every day.

There are stages in process writing: (1) Prewriting, or getting ready, thinking about what you want to write; (2) Rough Draft; (3) Peer Editing, or talking over your story with a partner; (4) Revising your writing - second draft; (5) Meeting with your Peer Editor again; (6) Third draft (7) Author's Circle - reading your story to the entire class and getting further feedback; (8) Final draft and editing with attention to spelling and punctuation because now the public is going to read it; (9) Publishing - copying over neatly, illustrating and binding into a book, to put on the library shelf for others to read.

In reading based on Children's Literature, the students read a variety of good books instead of basal readers. Each child keeps a list of the books he/she reads and the teacher checks on it. A child will be more motivated to read if he/she has a book on a topic that interests him/her and he/she has chosen. The key is making children responsible for their own reading.

In the Individualized Reading approach, there is a reading period every day. Each child reads his/her book individually. The teacher has individual conferences with one child at a time. This way, she/he can ascertain the child's progress and comprehension, check on his/her skills in reading and help with next steps for meeting the individual's need in reading.

Reading for information as a part of every interdisciplinary project. For older students, writing is done in every subject across the curriculum.

Guidebooks for teachers:

Searfoss, L.W. and Readence, J.E. Helping Children Learn to Read Second Edition. Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice Hall, 1989.

Huck, C. Children's Literature in the Elementary School Third Edition. Lexington MA, D.C.Heath, 1976.

Calkins, L.M. The Art of Teaching Writing Portsmouth, N.H., Heineman Educational Books, 1986

Graves, D.H. Writing: Teachers and Children at Work Portsmouth, N.H., Heineman Educational Books, 1983.

Rudman, M. Children's Literature: An Issues Approach Lexington, MA, D.C. Heath, 1976.

Zinsser, W. Writing to Learn. New York, Harper & Row, 1988.

Technology

A multi disciplinary approach. Understanding technology and its relation to the curriculum. Use of computers in the classroom. Going beyond the adding of small pieces of technology to the school curriculum. Using telecommunications as a resource to provide a global education for students. Using the Internet. This technology allows education to go beyond national boundaries and provides students with current, real life problem solving activities, access to databases and an on-going dialog with others in a variety of interest areas.

Guidebook for teachers:

Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Science and Technology. Malden, MA, Massachusetts Department of Education, 1994.

Kindergarten

The Kindergarten will be designed as a "developmental" approach to Early Childhood Education. We will give children a rich experience in the arts, singing and creative movement, children's literature and story telling, reading readiness, basic experiences in science and social studies, and beginning math concepts taught with manipulatives. There will be a daily schedule with large blocks of time for activities, alternating active and quiet activities. Content in interdisciplinary projects will be related to the real life of the child in the home, school and community. We will guide the child's socialization and learning to work with others. Our goal is to foster a love of learning.

Guidebooks for teachers:

Spodek, B. and Robison, H. New Directions in the Kindergarten. New York, Teachers College Press, 1965.

B. What teaching methods will be used? How will this pedagogy enhance student learning?

In line with the mission and objectives of the Pioneer Valley Charter School stated in sections 1

and 2 above, our teaching methods and learning theory are based on sound child development data, interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and learning, and the fostering of the seven kinds of intelligence identified by Howard Gardner of Harvard University.

Our program will have two kinds of teaching/learning: 1. Systematic instruction in skills, and 2. Interdisciplinary project based work for the application of skills. Each classroom will have Learning Centers for each curriculum area, with many materials on shelves readily accessible to the children. The daily schedule will have large blocks of time so that children can give sustained attention to their studies. The classroom can be best described as a "Workshop Classroom". Our direct skills teaching will be done both individually and in small groups.

Our Learning Theory is consistent with both the theory of multiple intelligences and the psychology of child development. We believe that learning is the discovery of personal meaning. Therefore, the teacher sees the child as an individual and builds on her/his strengths. Constant feedback and support are necessary in this process and are also a way of assessment. We believe that the student's academic, artistic, social and physical competencies should all be valued. The interdisciplinary project approach to teaching and learning meets students needs for active involvement, learning by doing and solving real problems. We believe that the teacher's role is to guide and facilitate each student's growth. We believe that a democratic classroom with shared decision making is important in the learning process. The school will be designed to meet each child's needs, fostering multicultural understanding and a global perspective.

Our title for this teaching approach is "Workshop Classrooms":

The Workshop Classroom differs from the traditional classroom in five kinds of structure and classroom management: the arrangement of space, the time schedule, and the teaching materials, the way of teaching the basic curriculum, and the relationships.

First, for purposes of contrast, let's look at a typical traditional class. The classroom space is filled with rows of desks, and the daily time schedule is cut up into 40 minute periods for a sequence of unrelated subjects. The teaching materials are books, paper, pencils, a blackboard and chalk. An art teacher may come and bring some art materials to the room once a week for thirty minutes. The way of teaching the basic curriculum is by reading books, listening to the teacher, writing reports, filling in workbooks and worksheets, practicing skills and taking tests. The relationships in the traditional classroom are dominated by the teacher. It is teacher-child, with little interaction from child to child. If children work together, it is often called cheating. The emotional tone of such classrooms has been described by such researchers as John Goodlad as flat - no joy in learning (A Place called school, 1982).

By contrast, a Workshop Classroom would be a place full of active, exciting learning. It takes a higher level of organization and structure for a teacher to set up and manage such a classroom. First, there is the classroom space and materials. The concept of a classroom as a workshop comes from the student's use of many hands-on materials (in addition to textbooks) when applying the skills in projects - science materials, math materials, art materials, etc. The desks or tables may be arranged in clusters, so that there is room for the learning materials to be kept on open shelves in different corners of the classroom, readily available to students. There is also a different structure in the time schedule of a Workshop Classroom. There would be times for math instruction and reading instruction, when attention is given to individual needs and skills. But the schedule would also include large blocks of time for interdisciplinary project work, when students would do more active learning, either individually or in small groups. An example of the type of learning activities in a project is given above, in the discussion of integrating the arts in the basic curriculum. Another feature of the Workshop classroom is the way the teacher structures the

teaching of the basic curriculum. The combination of times for specific skills teaching and times for project work is a structure that makes for a balanced curriculum and teaching methods. Also, the teacher provides for learning to come from investigating, sharing ideas, and learning from experience, or active learning, as well as from reading textbooks. And finally, there is structure in the relationships in the Workshop Classroom. Both teacher-child and child-child relationships are important. There are frequent class meetings in which the children share in the planning and are given choices of activity in the projects. Children learn responsibility and democratic living this way. Their interpersonal skills and intelligence are fostered. When the teacher plans for teams of 2 or 3 students to work together in cooperative learning groups, interacting with each other and the materials, sharing their ideas for the project, the classroom takes on more of a workshop atmosphere.

We will develop innovative, interdisciplinary project-oriented curriculum at the Pioneer Valley Charter School in our "Workshop Classrooms." We believe that it is in the Workshop Classroom that individual learners can put knowledge to work and learn to work in teams, developing personal skills as well as academic skills. It is in the Workshop Classroom that their seven kinds of intelligence, as defined by Howard Gardner, can best be fostered.

Defining a Project:

The terms "Project" and "Project Approach" are defined by Lillian Katz and Sylvia Chard in their book, *Engaging Children's Minds: The Project Approach* (1990). They state that "A project is an in-depth study of a particular topic that one or more children undertake... projects usually involve children in advanced planning and in various activities that require several days or weeks of sustained effort... An individual, a group, or the whole class might undertake a project."

It is in project work that students work in teams (cooperative learning), learn to listen to others and use speaking skills, seek and organize information, use thinking skills and multiple intelligences, do problem solving, apply the basic skills in real situations, and integrate the subjects in activities related to the real world. These skills and competencies advocated by the SCANS Report and the National Standards, are learned in projects.

Why a Project is both "Interdisciplinary and Relevant":

Project work combines the skills and knowledge of several subjects, or disciplines. For instance, the Science curriculum might designate that the third grade study animal habitats. The traditional teaching method would have the students read the Science textbook, fill in the worksheets, memorize the information and vocabulary, and take a test.

A teaching using the project approach would organize the study in a different way. S/he would first plan with the students in advance, giving them both assignments and choices of activity. S/he would divide the class into many small groups of 2 or more, depending on their interest, for cooperative learning. They would collect data from many sources, including the textbook, developing their research skills. They might put their information on charts or graphs, and keep individual journals. They would have many choices of ways to organize and present their data. Some might write original stories about animals that hibernate in the winter. A group might decide to paint a mural showing winter habitats of animals. In one class developing a project on this topic, a visiting artist came and helped a group build a bear den big enough for several small bears (or children) to get into. In this one interdisciplinary project, the students would use the skills and knowledge of several disciplines: Reading and writing, Math, Art, and Science.

This is the way the school subjects appear in the real world - combined. Many students today are

saying that what they do in school is not related to real life, and they see no reason to stay in school. They are dropping out of school as young as age eleven. Applying the skills in project work makes students' school work relevant to the real world. It fosters their intellectual curiosity and love of learning.

About the term "Project Approach":

Lillian Katz and Sylvia Chard state that they use the term "Project Approach" for two reasons. First, there are several ways to include projects in the curriculum. Some teachers have project work a few afternoons a week, some have it in learning centers, some do much integrated curriculum work. Second, Katz and Chard define project work as an approach to education:

"...project work as an approach refers to a way of teaching and learning, as well as to the content of what is taught and learned. This approach emphasizes the teacher's role in encouraging children to interact with people, objects, and the environment in ways that have personal meaning to them. As a way of learning, it emphasizes children's active participation in their own studies."
(ibid., p.3)

Why We Teach Both Skills and Projects:

For the past 40 years, teachers have been under pressure to teach the basic skills of the "3 R's," thinking they had to do either skills teaching or project work. So they have left out project work completely, thinking it would interfere with academics. John Goodlad, in his book A Place Called School (1982), described the unrelenting drill on skills at all levels in schools across America. Yet, year after year, millions of students have left school unable to apply the skills in real life.

Goodlad stated that what is lacking is project work. Katz and Chard point out that it is not an "either/or" situation. Research supports including both skills instruction and project work in a balanced curriculum. Both are necessary to help children understand and apply the skills.

Katz and Chard state:

"...a large body of research on children's development and learning in the last twenty years supports the proposition that the project approach is an appropriate way to stimulate and enhance children's intellectual and social development. Second, no evidence exists that the project approach puts children's intellectual or academic development at risk. Third, the [project] approach we propose is part of a balanced curriculum." (ibid., p.9, emphasis added)

Project work can be done with the curriculum already established in a school system. It is a way of applying the skills already being taught. We hope that our model school will show other teachers in the Pioneer Valley how they can make their curriculum more active and relevant to the real world of the student. In the Workshop Classroom, how they learn is as important as what they learn. And, most important of all, as one parent said, "In this school, it's the kind of people they become."

Guidebooks for Teachers on Learning and Teaching:

Charney, R.S. Teaching Children To Care: Management in the Responsive Classroom. Pittsfield MA, Eagle Printing, 1991.

Davis, G.A. Creativity Is Forever, Second Edition. Dubuque, Iowa, Kendal Hunt, 1986.

Dewey, John. Experience and Education New York, Macmillan, 1963 (1938).

Gardner, Howard. Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligence New York, Basic Books, 1983.

Pratt, C. I Learn From Children New York, Simon and Schuster, 1990.

Katz, L.G. and Chard, S.C. Engaging Children's Minds: The Project Approach. Norwood, n.J., Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1990.

Wood, C. Yardsticks: Children in the Classroom, Ages 4-12 Pittsfield MA, Eagle Printing, 1994.

C. Describe the school calender and hours of operation of the school.

The school calender and hours will be the same as the majority of the "sending" towns. This plan will help parents who have children in several schools. A sample calender from the Montague school handbook is enclosed.

Like most public schools in the Pioneer Valley, there will be half days periodically for parent conferences, inservice, staff development, teachers' planning together. Like all public schools, 180 days of school will be provided.

Provision will be made of make-up or "snow" days at the end of the school year.

We will have the teachers come early, for a week of Faculty Planning at the beginning of the school year for the first year.

The hours of the school will be like most of the sending towns: 8:30 to 3:00 daily. There will also be some half days, when school will close at noon.

11. Student Performance:

A. Describe your proposed plan to assess student performance.

Our assessment plans will be as follows, in accordance with the school's mission statement:

(1) Assessing the 7 kinds of intelligence:

In the early grades we will use the profile procedures developed by Howard Gardner and his associates at Tufts University for young children. Our teachers will develop a profile of each student, showing his/her talents, strengths and weaknesses in the seven kinds of intelligence. This will inform both teachers and parents in planning for each child's education. This "profile" will help us build on each child's strengths. (Our teachers may also design a "profile" study on older children, in cooperation with Howard Gardner's team at Harvard's Project Zero).

(2) Performance-based Assessment:

Throughout the school, we will use an assessment procedure based on each child's performance, as follows:

- Portfolios- a collection of a child's work over time.
- Performance Tasks- evaluated by teachers and students.
- Self-evaluation- setting goals with the student and evaluating together how the goals were met.

- Teacher checklists- sequences in skills will be kept by the teacher.
- Observation notes kept by the teacher.

(3) School Objectives List

The School Objective List stated in the first part of this application (section 2, And B) will be used as an assessment tool by teachers. It will be used as a check list to ascertain the progress of each child in the desired behaviors, competencies and skills listed. This statement covers the specific's of the school's mission - child development based, arts integrated and project based learning. First, the teacher will use this checklist to get a clear picture of each child's present stage of development and needs, and use this in planning for the child. Second, in the Spring, this list will be used again to help ascertain the child's progress. The teacher's evaluation of the individual child on this checklist of school objectives will be shared with the parents in the regular parent conferences.

(4) Standardized tests:

We will give the same standardized test as the "sending" schools at certain times of the year. The Coordinator will confer with the schools on this plan, cooperating and comparing achievement.

(5) Reporting to Parents+Parent conferences will be held three times a year, between the teacher and the parent. All the above types of assessment will be shared with the parent at those times. It may be beneficial for the student to share in letting the parent know about his progress in the conference, for some students.

B. What remediation will be available for under-performing students?

We believe that the policies for individualized, developmental learning indicated by our mission statement will make possible a higher level of achievement for many students that may have had difficulty in the traditional classroom. When a student does have problems, the faculty will meet as a team to decide on appropriate remediation for underachieving student. When appropriate, our remediation strategy will be: (1) CORE evaluations will be organized with the learning specialists from the sending schools. (2) These evaluations will help our faculty to use learning programs that help an individual child. (3) Remedial specialists will be called in when necessary.

C. How will student development towards the school's stated learning objectives be measured?

Each teacher will use the School Objectives List for periodical assessment of individual children and report this to parents as stated above in section B. Also, samples of each child's creative work will be saved and used to evaluate their work over time.

Criterion-referenced evaluation tools will be used to access skill development. For each curriculum area, teachers will be aware of age-appropriate skills and will keep detailed check lists as they have individual conferences with children about their academic work.

The children will continually use their emerging skills in projects involving reading, writing, calculations, scientific thinking, etc. The teachers will keep records and check lists on these performance-based uses of skills.

There will be periodic standardized testing to access each student's grasp of the skills, using the test that sending schools use.

12. Accountability:

A. What methods of self-assessment or evaluation will be used to ensure that the school is meeting its stated mission and objectives?

Self assessment will be conducted as follows. At the beginning of the year, in the Teacher Inservice Training and Planning Week, the teachers, Consultants and Coordinator together will make outlines for curriculum objectives and tasks for each grade or stage of child development and learning. These plans will be in accordance with our stated mission and objectives in section 1 of this application.

The objectives in each curriculum area will be related to the teacher's provision for the development of the whole child, teaching both skills and application of skills in interdisciplinary projects, integrating many curriculum areas. The faculty's planning and teaching will be informed by the state frameworks, national standards, professional literature and teachers' guide books, which the Board of Trustees has adopted for each curriculum area (see #9, Educational Program).

B. How will teachers and administrators be evaluated? Describe your standards for teacher and staff performance.

Following a school-based model of evaluation, the Coordinator will have conferences and consult with each teacher periodically through the year, to plan and to review and evaluate together (and decide on the next steps) for the progress and achievement of the teacher and her/his class in the stated objectives and goals. There will be teacher to teacher evaluation, also. For this, substitutes will be provided so that teachers can visit each other's classrooms, observe and give feedback to each other on ways to improve their teaching according to the school's stated mission and goals. The Coordinator will report this progress to the Board of Trustees periodically. Our certification standards for teacher and staff performance will be commensurate with the state standards for re-certification. The Coordinator will be evaluated by the Board of Trustees, with input from both teachers and parents.

C. How do you plan to hold your school accountable to the public and the parents of the children in attendance at your school?

Parent conferences will be held three times a year- in October, January and April. At these conferences the teacher will show the parent the child's portfolio with collected samples of work and the teacher's on-going record on the child's performance. A profile of the child's talents will be discussed.

The parents will also be given the results of the standardized tests that our students will take periodically, as the "sending" schools test.

The parents will be invited to performances and culmination presentations of interdisciplinary projects so that they can see the creative work of the students. The school will publish children's writing periodically.

For both the public and parents, a year-end summary of the school's accomplishments according to its mission statement and objectives will be given. The three broad mission areas will be addressed - Child development based learning and teaching methods, interdisciplinary project based curriculum, and the fostering of the seven intelligences (see section 2 above). This summary will be compiled by a group representing the teachers, parents, administration, and Board of Trustees and will finally be approved by the Board of Trustees.

D. Discuss your plan for regular review of school budgets and financial records.

The school will have a Finance Committee. The Coordinator will make the school budget annually, with input from the teachers on school needs, and in cooperation with the Finance Committee. The Board of Trustees will approve the budget. There will be a periodical review of the financial records by the Finance Committee. There will be a Bookkeeper to keep on-going records and these books will be audited annually.

E. Describe your system for maintaining school records and disseminating information required under public school law, including the annual report, as set forth in M.G.L.c.71,s.89.

Each teacher will keep an attendance record daily in an official attendance book. We will abide by the public school law in regard to school records, including the annual report, as decreed in M.G.L.c.71, s-89. A detailed plan will be included in future up-dates of this application.

13. Human Resources Information:

A. Describe the standards to be used in the hiring process, including teacher certification requirements or any other professional credentials.

All classroom teachers in the school will be required to have a Massachusetts teacher's certificate. They will be required to keep their certificate updated according to Massachusetts law.

In keeping with our mission statement and objectives emphasizing (1) Child Development, (2) the interdisciplinary project approach, and (3) the integration of the arts in the basic curriculum so as to foster the seven kinds of intelligence, we would seek teachers who have knowledge of child development principles on the level they are teaching (early childhood, middle grades, etc.). We would also seek teachers with an interest in the arts and some proficiency in at least one art form. This is necessary for empathy for creative children, and for their innovative contribution to faculty planning for new ways to integrate the arts in the basic curriculum.

All teachers hired will have several years of experience in the classroom and an interest in designing innovative curriculum with the interdisciplinary project approach, with attention to both skills instruction and the application of skills in projects.

As a part of the review process in addition to transcripts and letters of reference, the Coordinator will visit the applicant's present classroom and observe her/his teaching, when the applicant appears to be a likely candidate.

The candidate will be invited to come to the school for a day's visit and will be interviewed by several of the teachers with whom he/she would work. The final decision of whom to hire will rest with the faculty and the Coordinator and will be done by a democratic vote.

The Coordinator will recommend the hiring of each teacher to the Board of Trustees who will not unreasonably withhold approval. It is the Coordinator and Faculty's final responsibility to build a good working team in the school and to choose suitable staff members.

B. What is the targeted staff size and teacher/ student ratio?

There will be one certified head teacher for each classroom. There will also be a college student intern in each class, from the University of Massachusetts Department of Education. In the first year, we will have classes of multi-age groupings (K, 1-2, 3-4, 5-6), or 100 children. Therefore, in the first year, there will be 4 head teachers, 4 student interns, a Coordinator, a secretary and 6 part time consultants.

It is anticipated that the school size will increase to 150 children in the second year, adding a second grouping in the multi-age groupings. Therefore in the second year there will be 8 head teachers, 8 college student interns, a Coordinator and a secretary and 6 part time consultants.

In the third and fourth years, we may add more students depending on the space in the building we have. We may add 7-8 grade group, according to demand, until the total enrollment reaches 10 classes of 20 students each. The total staff at full enrollment (in the 4th or 5th year) will be 10 head teachers and 10 student interns, a Coordinator, a secretary, and 6 part time consultants for a total enrollment of 200 students (our enrollment goal)..

The teacher/student ratio from the beginning will be classrooms of 1 teacher to 10 students, counting the head teachers and teaching interns from the University. This ratio does not include the consultants, music teachers, etc. that we will have.

C. What professional development opportunities will be available to teachers and other staff?

We will have 6 consultants who will regularly work with the teachers. There will be a Faculty Planning Week before school begins in August. There will also be staff development half days at regular intervals throughout the school year. The Consultants will also be available to individual teachers as requested. In addition, the Principal will have periodic conferences with each teacher regarding his/her plans and accomplishments for his/her classes.

In addition, individual teachers will be coordinators for curriculum areas in which they have strengths. We will encourage a collegiality among teachers that fosters exchange of ideas and cooperative projects for their classes.

D. Describe your human resources policies governing: salaries, contracts, hiring and dismissal, benefits packages.

We will adopt a salary scale that will be commensurate with those in the area schools. Contracts will be issued by March 15th of each year. New staff will be selected according to the procedures and standards outlined in section 13 A above. Dismissals will be made only after two or three chances to improve have been given the teacher with help to demonstrate the goals and standards as described above.

Benefits packages will be the same as those in the schools in the area, based on a survey of benefits to be done in the next few months.

14.) School Governance:

A. Describe the internal form of management to be implemented at your school, including any plans to contract with outside group to manage the school.

The Coordinator and the teachers will plan the educational program. The Coordinator will support and oversee the work of the teachers, the learning program and the mission of the school as described in this charter application. The consultants will assist in this planning.

The Board of Trustees will hire the Coordinator and she/he will be responsible to them. The Board will approve the annual budget, which will be submitted by the Coordinator. The Finance Committee will assist the Coordinator in preparing the budget.

There will be teacher coordinators of science, whole language and other curriculum areas, according to the particular strengths and interest of the staff. Cooperation and collegiality will be encouraged in the governance and implementation of the school's curriculum.

B. How will the board of trustees be chosen?

The original Board of Trustees will be volunteers, solicited by the founding teachers. When a vacancy occurs, the teachers, principal and Board of Trustees will work together in a democratic way to select a new Board member, all having a final vote in the selection.

C. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the Board.

The initial Coordinator will be hired by the Steering Committee (acting as the Board of Trustees). It is intended that she/he will be Coordinator of the school and will continue when the Board of Trustees is formerly constituted. When this post is vacated, a new Coordinator will be hired by the Board of Trustees with assistance from the teachers. The teachers will interview any new candidates. The final selection will be made by a vote of the combined teaching staff and the Board, in a democratic fashion.

The Board shall approve the annual budget submitted to them by the Coordinator. The Finance Committee will assist the Coordinator in making the budget. Both the Coordinator and the Finance Committee will receive cash flow statements monthly from the Bookkeeper. They will oversee the continuing finances of the school and will report periodically to the Board.

The Board of Trustees will be responsible for the continuing well-being of the school, including fiscal management and fund-raising, legal matters, public relations, the building site, and the hiring of the Coordinator and faculty recommended by the Coordinator.

The Board shall be responsible for the completion of an annual report showing the school's fiscal integrity and the school's progress in it's stated mission.

D. Describe the relationship of the board to teachers and administrators?

While the Board manages the Business of the school, it recognizes that it has appointed the Coordinator to manage the educational activities of the school. Therefore the Board's approval of the curriculum and budget will be done in consultation with the Coordinator and a representative of the teaching staff and will be in accordance with the educational program described in the Pioneer Valley Charter School Application.

The hiring of all new faculty or Coordinators will be done by democratic vote of the combined Board and faculty. The teachers will be included in the interview and search process.

It is the duty of the Board to support the efforts of the Coordinator and teachers to carry out the educational programs as described in the Charter School Application. If a misunderstanding or dispute should arise, the concerned parties will try to settle the matter through meetings and discussions. The Board or Coordinator can request mediation from an outside group to assist the group in coming to a mutually agreeable solution.

E. Discuss the nature of parental and student involvement in decision-making matters.

In the classroom, students will be involved in a great deal of “shared decision-making” when the teacher and students plan projects. Students will have a balance of both assigned work and choice. They will choose things as: whom they will work with, when and where they will do certain studies and activities. They will choose which part of a “jig saw” type of cooperative learning project they want to be responsible for. Each teacher will have to use her/his judgment as to how much choice an individual student can manage. In the beginning of such an interdisciplinary program, many students need a great deal of teacher guidance before they can manage much choice, especially if the student has come to us from a traditional school background where they were always told what to do.

Parents and students will first choose whether they want to come to this school, and be in agreement with its Interdisciplinary and Arts-Integrated approach to learning. This initial choice has made an important difference in a positive school climate in many schools. Parents can choose how they want to help in the classroom and which school committees they want to work on. A class parent will coordinate the parent’s contribution in each class. Both fathers and mothers will be encouraged to participate in class activities. There will be grandparents’ visit days also.

15.) School Community:

A. What type of community environment do you hope to foster at your school?

We will consciously build a sense of community in our school., This begins with the choice of parents, students, and teachers to come to this school. It is their school from the beginning.

For teachers, community is built by having the Coordinator foster a great deal of collegiality among teachers. Time must be provided for their planning together frequently. A flexible schedule will give time for joint class projects. The Coordinator should discover individual teacher’s strengths and make possible his/her sharing these strengths with other teachers in workshops or collaborative projects for students. Teachers could help other teachers plan as “science coordinator” or “whole language coordinator, etc. For students, community is first built in the classroom. Morning meetings to welcome children, listen so their “news” from home, and plan the day are an important way to help children “belong.” Shared decision making and choices for children in projects are other ways to make each one feel an important part of the community.

The students contribute to the school community in their presentations and culmination activities when completing a project. A fourth grade may write picture books for the kindergarten and go and read to them. In planning the cooperative learning program, teachers may have older children help younger children in projects. The Coordinator and teachers in the Pioneer Valley Charter School

regard the building of a sense of community as an important part of the school and will continually plan activities that foster this community spirit.

B. Describe the nature and extent of parent involvement in the life of the school.

Parents will be involved at every level of the Pioneer Valley Charter School operation. There will be parents on the Board of Trustees. There will be an active Parent Teachers Organization. Parents will be involved with community members in the initial setting up of the school, on such committees as: the Admissions Committee, the Recruitment and Marketing Committee, the Funding Committee, the Building and Equipment Committee, etc.

When school starts, there will be a class parents (either mother or father) for each class. These will be in touch with other parents to arrange contributions to class activities. There may be Saturday sports or clean-up days for parents and children.

The Coordinator and teachers will encourage parent involvement in the school. There will be teacher parent conferences about children's progress three times a year. There will be a parents visiting night in the fall when teachers explain the curriculum plans for the year. Parents will be invited to presentations of children's creative work. Parents will take children on field trips related to their studies. We hope to have continuous involvement of parents in the school.

C. Describe the relationship of your school to the surrounding community, and vice versa.

We will make widespread use of the community in our school, to make our curriculum relevant to the real world. Field trips will be an important part of our social studies program. In science, we will use the outdoors as one of our areas for inquiry and investigation. For older students, there may be apprenticeships in the community to make their studies relevant to their interest in exploring work in our economy.

We will have partnerships with the arts organizations and science centers in the Pioneer Valley. We will invite "artist's in residence" to come to our school and work with the students. We will take students to museums and performances.

We will have business/ school partnerships. Business people will be encouraged to come to the school to contribute to class activities; everything from reading a story to the Kindergarten to showing a 4th grade how to do parallel wiring for lights in the puppet stage they are building.

We will have parent committees who work on Partnerships and Apprenticeships. A class parent in each class will foster parent involvement and field trip planning.

16. Replicability and District Relations:

A. How will your charter school offer replicable educational models to the schools in the surrounding districts?

First, we will establish a cooperative relationship with schools in the surrounding districts. We will present our Charter School as an extension of the options that sending schools can offer to students, parents and teachers. We will help them see how our school will enhance the educational offerings in the Pioneer Valley. This, we hope, will combat the feeling of some that charter schools will “take away” students and funds. We will try to be one of “their” Schools.

Second, concurrent with the above cooperative attitude, we will have a “Teachers Helping Teachers” program. In this, we will plan joint meetings and workshops with our staff and theirs. These could address issues of curriculum integration, arts in the schools, whole language teaching, or any topic of mutual interest. These workshops could be given in inservice staff development half days. The workshops leaders could be teachers from any of the schools - sharing ideas and building on strengths.

These activities, the mutual sharing of good ideas in education, would be planned by an Outreach Committee comprised of parents and teachers from our school and other teachers in the surrounding districts.

Once we get a “shared ideas” format going, a “Teachers Helping Teachers” organization, we will invite teachers from other districts to visit our school as a model. We will also suggest that our teachers visit their schools.

It is with an exchange of ideas that teachers will be reached and encouraged to try new methods. We believe that the most effective way to help teachers change is to provide a way for other teachers to share their inspired ideas of “what works” with students. Teachers Helping Teachers is our motto!

B. If applicable, provide any specific programs to be provided by the charter school which would directly benefit the district.

See 16 A above. We will develop specific programs when the school starts. Teachers will do this planning together.

C. What efforts, if any, have you made to build rapport with the district(s) from which your charter school would be drawn?

We have begun to contact teachers, Superintendents and Principals of schools in the “sending” districts. We are continuing this work. We see this building of good will and cooperation as an important foundation for the establishment of our Charter school.

We will report this progress in updates of our Charter Application.

17.) Building Options:

A. Describe your present options for a school building.

After looking at several options, we have found an ideal site for the school --a building with 8,236 square feet of ground floor space. It was formerly a restaurant where large banquets, receptions and dances were held, in four large one-story extensions of the main building. The central part has an upstairs apartment where the school's offices and storage will be located. The extensive ground floor area has been vacated for several years, with the exception of one wing where an art gallery and a law office have been located. In addition to the large paved parking area, the site includes four and a half acres of land suitable for playing fields and sports activities.

B. Demonstrate how this site would be a suitable facility for the proposed school, including any plans to renovate and bring the facility to compliance with all the applicable school building codes.

This site is located on a main route in Deerfield, which is central to the area and towns the Pioneer Valley Charter School will serve. The unusually large amount of ground floor space in the building would mean that all rooms used for educational purposes would be on the first floor and accessible to handicapped and special needs students. The school offices would be located in what is now a second floor apartment. There is enough space on the ground floor for 9 classrooms, an all-purpose, a kitchen, a library, and several small rooms for music instruction, tutoring, or conferences.

Some renovations would be necessary to meet the building codes and make it suitable for school use. Sound proof walls would be added to create classrooms where there are now vast open "banquet rooms". More facilities would be added to existing bathrooms and the bathroom areas enlarged. A new kitchen would be added. Windows would be cut in some exterior walls. We may add more exits. When the new walls are in, the baseboard heating system will be extended as needed. Florescent lighting and floor coverings will be added as required. The building is in good shape. The present owner has put in a new furnace and a new roof on part of the building. We would have to roof another part. When we are sure of having a charter we will engage an architect familiar with school design and requirement, to make these plans. It is unusual to find a building in good condition with so much space on the ground floor.

C. Discuss any progress or future plans for acquisition of a school building.

Now that we have found a suitable building that is for sale, our plans are as follows:

At the time we are sure of being chartered, we will first incorporate the school, not-for-profit. We will also begin a fund raising drive to raise money in stages. See D below for Fundraising plans.

D. Describe financing plans, if any.

We will raise money for : (1) an option to buy the building at a price to be agreed at that time;
(2) a sum to pay an architect and contractor for plans and estimates for renovations needed;
(3) money to purchase and renovate the building.
(4) money needed to furnish and equip the building.

We will organize a Fundraising Committee for this purpose in March of 1995.

18.) Code of conduct:

A. Discuss any rules and guidelines governing student behavior.

We intend to build a strong sense of community in our school. In each classroom, the students will be involved in planning their own rules for behavior, setting limits and expectations of behavior.

Teachers will emphasize humaneness in their dealing with students, parents, and peers. Humaneness in the classroom is defined by Bussis and Chittenden of the Educational Testing Service at Princeton, N.J., in a study of teachers, as honesty of encounters and respect for persons. When teachers respect children, listen to their ideas, give them choices, emphasize and build on their strengths, the children in turn will respect adults and each other. This is how teachers build a respecting, supporting atmosphere in a classroom and school.

Class meetings will be held in each classroom, every morning. This is a way to begin the day that allows in-put from the students. Their own concerns will be given attention. Then there will also be more class meetings later in the day, to share and appreciate the accomplishments of the students and to plan "next steps." When children know what is expected of them and have opportunity to choose some of their activities, they feel secure and self confident.

It has been noted in the past that classrooms with much project work have fewer behavior problems. If difficulties arise, the child will be asked to sit apart from the group "until you are ready to come back." At that point, the teacher will help the child to understand "how you could do better." Sometimes children eventually can realize when they have a need for "time out" and will remove themselves for a period of reflection, until they feel they can rejoin the group.

Our teachers will be guided by such books as Teaching Children To Care: Management in the Responsive Classroom (1992) by Ruth Carney. They will give attention to the teaching of behavior and the Social Curriculum.

B. Describe your school's policies regarding student expulsion and suspension.

Our school will be guided by and comply with MGL, Chapter 71, Section 37 H concerning school discipline. We understand that it is permissible to ask on our school application "Have you ever been expelled?" Also, we understand that we can legally deny admission based on past expulsion. This is not considered to be a matter of discrimination, legally. We have to be able to serve the student and also consider the impact of a child's influence on other children's ability to benefit from the school climate.

If a child already in the school has problems controlling his/her behavior, the teacher and Coordinator will meet with the parent to discuss the problem and plan ways to help the child, both at home and at school. In all cases, our school will comply with the MGL, Chapter 71, Section 37 H.

Special needs students will be disciplined in accordance with Public School Law, Chapter 766. The above involvement of parents will also be followed.

19.) Special Needs & Bilingual Students:

A. Describe how your school will accommodate special needs students.

We will comply with Massachusetts law 71A and 71B regarding Special Needs and Bilingual children. In keeping with the philosophy of inclusion as specified by the state of Massachusetts, the Pioneer Valley Charter School has a commitment to serve children with special needs. Because our approach to learning and teaching is both learner centered and designed to accommodate a variety of learning styles, many students will have their individual learning needs met in the course of the classroom activities.

Due to staffing limitations and constraints determined by the Charter Application, we will not be able to take special needs students requiring additional personnel or a divergence from the teaching philosophy of the school. However, every reasonable effort will be made to meet the needs of a student appropriate to the Pioneer Valley School. If a student's special needs so require, the sending school must provide help and staff trained to work with the student's disability (according to the Massachusetts 766 regulations).

The Pioneer Valley Charter School will undoubtedly be able to meet the needs of children with special needs related to learning style, visual, auditory or processing problems noted informally by a teacher or parent or as determined through the special education CORE process, resulting in an IEP for that child. If a potential student may be applying to the Pioneer Valley Charter School with an IEP, a member of our staff must be invited to the TEAM to insure that the placement is appropriate and to share information with the TEAM regarding application procedures and available space.

Only 15% on the Pioneer Valley Charter School population, at any time, will be IEP in order to be consistent with the goals/methodology/staffing the school has laid out in the application. Each school year, these places shall be held for special needs students (held out of the lottery) until April 1st. At that time 5% of the unused places will be given to students on the waiting list (determined by the lottery). Thus, at any time, a minimum of 10% of the total places will be used by special needs students as determined by a CORE evaluation. It is expected that usually the placement of a special needs student with and IEP will be decided in the spring for actual placement at the beginning of the following school year.

In all cases, when special needs students apply, we will meet with the parents and the staff of the sending school to determine what is the best school setting for that child, the one most able to give appropriate help for the child's particular needs in learning. We will cooperate with the sending school to give help to the special needs child.

B. Describe how your school will accommodate bilingual students.

When a bilingual student applies, we will meet with the parents and the sending school to plan the most appropriate ways to meet the individual student's need. We will seek help with ESL teaching. Students from other countries and cultures would enrich our student body. With appropriate help, they often learn a second language quickly. In the meantime we will seek parent and other help to assist them in fully participating in the activities of the school. We will comply with Massachusetts law 71A and 71B in our work with Bilingual students.

20. Funding:

A. Devise a start-up budget covering the planning and capital expenses before school opening.

Expenses:(to cover one year's time)

Coordinator's Interim Salary	30,000
Stipends for teacher planning	10,000
Printing, photo stating	3,000
Postage, publicity	1,500
Insurance	1,500
Office expenses, telephone	1,500
Outreach, school visits	2,000

Building Purchase *	350,000
Renovations	150,000
Classroom Supplies	100,000
Total Expenses	649,500

B. Do you plan to conduct any fund-raising efforts to generate capital or supplement the per pupil allocations? If so, explain.

*Fund Raising Drive will bring in revenue to purchase, renovate and furnish building. Provision for mortgage payments made in annual operating budget, in case we do not raise enough for full payment for building at the outset.

C. Using the attached template, devise a 5 year budget covering all projected sources of revenue, both public and private, and planned expenditures.

On page 42, and footnotes for budget are on page 43.

Charter School Operating Budget

Five Year Projection

DESCRIPTION	FY 1996	FY1997	FY 1998	FY1999	FY 2000
REVENUES					
Per Pupil Tuition Revenue	450,000	675,000	900,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Student Entitlements					
Grants # students enrolled	100	150	200	200	200
TOTAL REVENUES	450,000	675,000	900,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
EXPENSES					
<i>Direct Student Costs:</i>					
Transportation					
Supplies	10,000	15,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Computers and Materials	3,000	5,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Field Study	3,000	6,000	9,000	9,000	9,000
Insurance Expense	4,500	6,500	7,500	7,500	7,500
Total Direct Student Costs	20,500	32,500	51,500	51,500	51,500
<i>Personnel:</i>					
Principal/Executive	65,000	65,000 40,000*	66,950 41,200	66,950 42,436	68,938 43,709
Teachers (add art+music 1996)	152,000	276,000*	392,480	404,254	415,481
Clerical sec + bookkeeper	50,000	50,000	75,000	77,250	79,569
Custodians	34,000	44,000	54,000	55,620	57,289
Benefits	55,980	88,200	116,933	120,872	126,197
Staff Development	10,000	15,000	20,000	25,000	25,000
Total Personnel	366,980	578,200	766,563	792,382	816,183
<i>Occupancy:</i>					
Rent					
Mortgage	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Maintenance	5,500	5,500	7,500	7,500	7,500
Utilities	17,000	17,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Janitorial Supplies	3,500	6,000	8,500	8,500	8,500
Total Occupancy	46,000	48,500	56,000	56,000	56,000
<i>Office:</i>					
Supplies	2,400	3,400	4,400	4,400	4,400
Equipment Rental/Maintenance	1,000	1,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Telephone/Communications	2,400	2,900	3,500	3,500	3,500
Accounting & Payroll	2,500	2,500	3,500	3,500	3,500
Printing & Copying	1,400	1,800	2,800	2,800	2,800
Postage & Shipping	1,000	1,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Total Office	10,700	12,600	18,200	18,200	18,200
<i>Other:</i>					
TOTAL EXPENSES	444,180	671,800	892,263	918,082	941,883
EXCESS (or DEFICIENCY)	5,820	3,200	7,737	81,918	58,117
BEGINNING FUND BALANCE	450,000	675,000	900,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
ENDING FUND BALANCE	5,820	3,200	7,737	81,918	58,117

Notes on the Budget

1. Per Pupil Expenditures are figured for average of \$4,500 per pupil in 1995, 1996, 1997, and \$5,000 per pupil in 1998, and 1999.
2. As the enrollment increases each year expenses are increased, for 3 years. They are stabilized when our goal of 200 students is enrolled (after 1997).
3. Pensions are assumed to be picked up by the state outside of this budget.
4. Utilities include heat and electricity.
5. Transportation is not included because parents will furnish it in car pools (see data on transportation in the application).
6. Personnel figures show a 3% cost of living increases per year for all salaries except the Principal, who has raises less frequently.
7. Teachers salaries will be paid at a salary scale similar to public schools in the area (all teachers will be certified). An average salary of 30,000 has been used in the budget, with 2,000 a year for substitutes.
8. We will expand our teaching staff in 1996, to include an art teacher and a music teacher.
9. We will add an assistant principle in 1996 to our administrative staff.

21. Transportation:

A. Discuss plans for transporting students within the local school district to and from school.

The 15 towns that will be served by the Pioneer Valley Charter School are close to each other. They are from 10 minute to 30 minute drives from each other. The parents are accustomed to going from town, to town to buy groceries, go to work, attend church, eat in restaurants, attend sports events, cultural events and entertainment of their choice. The parents would also be willing to do car pooling for transportation of their children to a school of their choice.

On the other hand, the sending school districts would find it too costly to send a few students to our school by bus. We should not ask this of them.

B. How will students who live outside the local district be transported?

See A above. This plan will apply to all children.

C. If you plan to implement an extended day or extended year program which requires transportation beyond what the district provides, what arrangements will be made to transport students?

At this time, we have no extended day plans.

**Hampshire Regional School District
Chesterfield-Goshen Regional School District
Union 66 School District
School Calendar for 1994-95**

SEPTEMBER					
M	Tu	W	Th	F	
			F	2	
L	6	7	8	9	
12	13	14	15	16	
19	20	21	22	23	
26	27	28	29	30	

20 school days
F = faculty meetings
2 = Classes begin for K-7
L = Labor Day
6 = classes begin for 8-12
20 = staff development half day
YTD = 20 days

FEBRUARY					
M	Tu	W	Th	F	
		1	2	3	
6	7	8	9	10	
13	14	15	16	17	
P	v	v	v	v	
27	28				

15 school days
P = President's Day
v = vacation days
YTD = 108 or 109 days

OCTOBER					
M	Tu	W	Th	F	
3	4	5	6	7	
C	11	12	13	14	
17	18	19	20	21	
24	25	26	27	28	
31					

20 school days
C = Columbus Day
26 = staff development half day
YTD = 40 days

MARCH					
M	Tu	W	Th	F	
		1	2	3	
6	7	8	9	10	
13	14	15	16	17	
20	21	22	23	24	
27	28	29	30	31	

23 school days
7 = staff development half day
YTD = 131 or 132 days

NOVEMBER					
M	Tu	W	Th	F	
	1	2	3	4	
7	8	9	10	V	
14	15	16	17	18	
21	22	half	TG	v	
28	29	30			

19 school days
V = Veterans Day
23 = half day
24/25 = Thanksgiving break
YTD = 59 days

APRIL					
M	Tu	W	Th	F	
3	4	5	6	7	
10	11	12	13	14	
P	v	v	v	v	
24	25	26	27	28	

15 school days
5 = staff development half day
14 = v for HRHS only
P = Patriot's Day
v = vacation days
YTD = 146 or 147 days

DECEMBER					
M	Tu	W	Th	F	
			1	2	
5	6	7	8	9	
12	13	14	15	16	
19	21	21	22	v	
v	v	v	v	v	

16 school days
8 = staff development half day
Dec 23-Jan 1 = vacation
YTD = 75 days

MAY					
M	Tu	W	Th	F	
1	2	3	4	5	
8	9	10	11	12	
15	16	17	18	19	
22	23	24	25	26	
M	30	31			

22 school days
12 = staff development half day
M = Memorial Day
YTD = 168 or 169 days

JANUARY					
M	Tu	W	Th	F	
NY	3	4	5	6	
9	10	11	12	13	
MLK	17	18	19	20	
23	24	25	26	27	
30	31				

19 or 20 school days
NY = New Year's Day observed
MLK = Martin Luther King Day
27 = teacher work day
(no classes at Hampshire,
Southampton or Westhampton)
YTD = 93 or 94 days

JUNE					
M	Tu	W	Th	F	
			1	2	
5	6	7	8	9	
12	13	14	15	16	
19	20	21	22	23	
v	v	v	v	v	

11 or 12 school days
15 or 16 = 180 days
22 or 23 = 185 days
16-23 = makeup days
as needed
YTD = 180 days

NOTE:

Does not include two teacher work days to be scheduled in Chesterfield and Goshen, which will affect last day for students in those schools.

Deerfield-based K-8 charter school readies application

By CHRIS COLLINS
Recorder Staff

SOUTH DEERFIELD — The Pioneer Valley Charter School Steering Consortium is submitting a final application Wednesday that it hopes will net state approval for a charter school.

And, if the application is approved, the group hopes to be able to open the state-sanctioned public school that will serve 100 Franklin County students in kindergarten through Grade 8 in the first year of operations, tentatively slated for fall 1996.

The idea of state-supported charter schools to encourage innovative approaches to public education is part of recent education reform laws.

"I think that we have a good chance (for charter approval) because we are the only elementary school applying from Franklin County," consortium steering committee member Marianne Everett said. "The other applicants are mostly at the middle school and high school level."

Everett said that the consortium, which is composed of teachers, professionals, area parents and members of the business and arts communities, submitted their preliminary charter application on Nov. 21. The application was one of 23 charter school projects statewide that are up for consideration.

She also said there may be more than that number submitting final applications Wednesday. This could decrease the steering committee's chances at securing the charter, which Everett said is the most important step if the school is to open.

"It's sort of a 'Catch-22' situation," Everett said. "You can't really do anything, like secure a site or raise any money, until you have the charter."

Everett said the group is looking at several potential South Deerfield sites for the school. It can't make a formal move until March 15, when the state is expected to announce its decision. No fund raising has begun for the same reason, said Everett, although each charter school has to

raise all of its own money for start-up costs.

But although the future of the charter is in question, Everett said the committee has definite ideas about how the school will be run if it opens. She said the school "will integrate the arts throughout the classroom curriculum," and will approach organizing classroom activities differently from the way "traditional" schools do.

"Traditional (public) schools are very textbook oriented," Everett said. "We feel that children will need to learn not only the skills, but the application of those skills through hands-on activities."

She said each classroom will have an "arts center," with more emphasis placed on hands-on activities than textbooks. The teacher/student ratio will be 10 students to every one teacher, and the school's curriculum, Everett hopes, will be developed in a cooperative effort of area public school teachers and consortium members.

"We want to emphasize that we want to work co-operatively with the teachers that are working in schools today in developing this curriculum," Everett said. "Our goal is not to compete (with other schools) but to work together."

Many of those same teachers would be welcome at the charter school and to teach once it does open, Everett said.

"The charter provides for a teacher to take a leave of absence for their current school for two years if they decide that they would like to teach at a charter school," Everett said. "There are some awfully good teachers in this area that we hope will come and teach."

Everett also said the plan is for the school to house 100 students in year one of operation, with an additional 50 students added in the second and third year to reach the school's total capacity of 200. The school will be open to students in all Franklin County towns on a first come, first-served basis, with remaining spaces decided by lottery.

For more information, contact the Pioneer Valley Charter School Consortium, Box 139, Deerfield 01342 or call 773-7632.

BASCOMB AND EDELSTEIN, P.C.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

P.O. BOX 535

NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01061-0535

2 BAY ROAD, HADLEY CROSSING

HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS 01035

MICHAEL Z. EDELSTEIN
G. DEVON BASCOMB

February 1, 1995

(413) 586-4540

1-800-238-0010

FAX (413) 585-0632

Helen L. Gibson, M.Ed
19 Dry Hill Road
Montague, MA 01351

RE: Pioneer Valley Charter School

Dear Helen:

Thank you for sharing your proposal with me by your letter of January 24, 1995. As you know, I have two daughters, ages 10 and 16. Meaghan attends Mohawk Regional High School and Arbra attends Sanderson Academy, which is the local public grammar school. I am very serious about my daughters' education and I have helped conduct moot court programs at my older's daughter's Middle School in the past. I am very excited about your proposal. I think it is on the cutting edge of modern educational theory and is designed to prepare students for a very competitive and rapidly evolving world that children will have to compete in. The importance of integrated learning, especially with the arts, is now being recognized. My partner's son was attending an exclusive private prep school which required that he write a paper in math class regarding the application of math to a particular art.

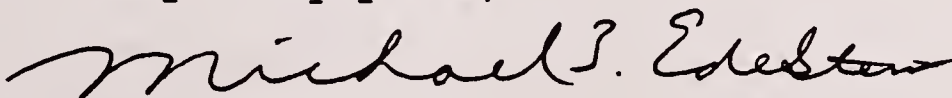
The ability to appreciate the complexity of the world around us and to apply practical knowledge to solve problems creatively should be an essential goal of all education. Students need to learn that the abstract curriculum they now study, provides powerful tools to solve problems and to create in general. Students today have little appreciation of the value of the things they learn daily at school. Without that appreciation they are ill prepared for the future.

We cannot predict what jobs will exist in future. The only rule is change and we must accept that the process of learning and problem solving is much more important than the content, given the changing economic environment. The model you have proposed and described has a much greater chance of success than traditional methods because it more realistic. In addition, properly applied it can be much more exciting. Young people want to be involved in activity that is interesting and challenging. They are easily bored and distracted. Integrated learning can be more focussed and can be sculpted to coincide with a particular student's interests or avocations. Applied knowledge seems to stick better than abstract learning and regurgitation. On the other hand, there are situations when pure abstract study and memorization of facts is essential. Integrated learning should not reject that, but should strive to demonstrate to students that hard, boring work can be the essential prerequisite for more exiting and creative projects. Perhaps the term "balanced learning" might describe this. However, the most difficult hurdle in education today is motivation. Integrated learning addresses this problem head-on.

The integrated approach is not necessarily easier. On the contrary, it should be much more challenging and demanding to both the educators and the students. Certainly, students would have greater responsibility and control over their education. But most business leaders agree that today's educational systems fails to produce the type of independent, dynamic, self-starter they are looking for. Some of the most conservative members of our society are crying out for this kind of change because they need to compete in an international market place.

I have said little about the importance of the arts in education. As a musician and attorney, among other things, I see the obvious connections between art, culture, business and society. In America we take such things for granted. There is no question that neglecting the arts in our schools will be harmful to our society. It not surprising that in Japan almost \$5.00 per student is expended towards the arts, while here it is about \$.15. We must improve our education system by creating real choices. I think the charter schools are the real model for effective education in the 21st century.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Z. Edelstein".

Michael Z. Edelstein

127 Silver Street
Greenfield, MA 01301
February 8, 1995

Executive Office of Education
Massachusetts State House
Boston, MA 02133

To Whom It May Concern:

I am grateful to be able to endorse the proposed Pioneer Valley Charter School.

As a parent who has lived in the Pioneer Valley area for the past 23 years, I can see what a tremendously positive impact such a school will have on our area.

I am especially pleased to learn that the school would encompass ²¹ towns, thereby enabling access to a wide-ranging demographic population which will enhance the diversity of the school body.

I am employed in a child protective agency as a secretary and have been so employed for nearly seven years. Through these years of exposure to young children, I have developed a special interest in the well-being of our area youth. It has also been my experience that children who are given the opportunity to attend such a curriculum-enriched school as that proposed as our Charter School, do extremely well. This was true of my own child who was fortunate enough to attend such a school for five years. I saw the dramatic change it made in her life and that of many of her young classmates. Such an education, I feel, should not be dependent on one's parents' ability to pay - this needs to be incorporated into our educational system.

I also approve of the proposed school's location. It would seem to be ideal, affording easy accessibility to all the qualifying towns.

I would conclude by restating my unconditional approval of this school, and would encourage you to make its realization your highest priority.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Dorothy Arsenault

UCC JUST PEACE YOUTH PROJECT

c/o Bill Gibson, 19 Dry Hill Rd

Montague MA 01351

Sponsored by the Just Peace Center of Western MA

413-367-9457



January 27, 1995

To; The Executive Committee of the Pioneer Valley Charter School

You proposal for a charter school that will have a focus on Multiculturalism is a wonderful idea.

I direct something called The Just Peace Youth Project, it is part of The United Church of Christ, (the congregational Churches that are on all the town commons in New England). The project works with youth (5-9 grades) around social justice issues in the area that will be served by your proposed school. I believe that part of our success, and certainly a lot of our support is due from the fact that kids just don't get taught social justice in school. Both they and their parents are hungry for it and the world needs it.

Good luck getting going, and I will certainly spread the word about your good work through the Just Peace Youth Project network.

Your friend,

16 Sherman Drive
Turners Falls, Ma
February 13, 1995

Re: Pioneer Valley Charter School

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

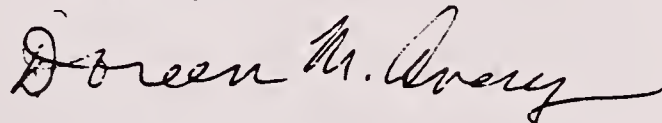
My present position is that of Account Clerk at the Franklin Superior Court Probation Department for the past seven years. Previous to this position I worked at home doing bookkeeping and accounting because I was busy raising five children.

As my children went thru their years at school, I quickly recognized the different learning styles and needs of each child. I believe that all areas of a child's developmental and growth stages should be considered in approaching their educational needs and this does not always happen in the traditional school of learning.

I now have three grandchildren growing up in this area. A Charter school, such as Pioneer Valley Charter School, would be a wonderful choice for parents and students in the Pioneer Valley. Methods of teaching must be improved to prepare our children for tomorrow's workplace.

I strongly support the Pioneer Valley Charter School.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doreen M. Avery". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

DOREEN M. AVERY

